

Department of Defense Bloggers Roundtable With Staff Sergeant Robert Gutierrez, Air Force Special Tactics Combat Controller and Recipient of the Air Force Cross Via Teleconference Subject: Gutierrez's Receiving of the Air Force Cross Time: 12:46 p.m. EDT Date: Tuesday, September 20, 2011

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LIEUTENANT TIFFANY WALKER (Office of the Secretary of Defense Public Affairs): OK, hello everyone. Good afternoon. I'd like to welcome you all to the first of two Department of Defense Bloggers Roundtables that will take place today, Tuesday, September 20th, 2011. My name is Lieutenant Tiffany Walker, with the office of secretary of Defense for public affairs, and I will be moderating our call today.

Today we are honored to have as our guest Tech Sergeant Robert Gutierrez (sic\Staff Sergeant), the brave Air Force special tactics combat controller, receiving the nation's second-highest award for valor during a combat action, the Air Force Cross. A note to our bloggers on the line today and our reporters that are in the room, please remember to clearly state your name and blog organization in advance of your question. Respect the tech sergeant's time and keep your questions succinct and to the point.

For everyone's information, this call is being recorded and will be transcribed via the Fed News Service, when that will be available at a later date. The audio file should be pushed up this afternoon.

And now we'll take an opening statement from Tech Sergeant Robert Gutierrez (sic\Staff Sergeant). Go ahead.

STAFF SERGEANT ROBERT GUTIERREZ: Good afternoon. First I would like to say thank you for your time and your questions about what's going on. I'm beyond honored and humbled to receive this kind of award. It puts you in a category with some of the bravest men on the planet.

So I'm humbled, and I definitely want to come out and say that, you know, in true reality I wouldn't be here today if it wasn't for the support structure I have within the Air Force, and also within AFSOC, everyone who I work with. And then the brave men that -- on the Special Forces team that was with me that night. My medic who saved my life, and

the outstanding pilots that covered our mission, the HM pilots, the F-16 pilots and the ISR platforms that helped us out. So I would always -- I'm eternally thankful and grateful for them for helping me out.

LT. WALKER: OK, thank you, Tech Sergeant (sic\Staff Sergeant). Is that all for right now?

SGT. GUTIERREZ: Yes, ma'am.

LT. WALKER: OK. So we'll take the bloggers and reporters in order of appearance on the line. Chuck, you're first. Go ahead, sir.

Q: Thank you. Chuck Simmins from America's North Shore Journal. Sergeant, thank you so much for your service. First of all, can I confirm this was the action for which Robby Miller received the Medal of Honor?

SGT. GUTIERREZ: That was, sir, a different -- a different event. I was attached to the Special Forces team that had Robby Miller on the night and morning that he died in battle. This one's for a different --

Q: A different event?

SGT. GUTIERREZ: Yes, sir.

Q: OK. Could you, without breaching any secrets, could you lay out just how your job functioned under fire? What does an Air Force controller do during a battle? SGT. GUTIERREZ: Basically, sir, as an Air Force combat controller, when I'm attached to an Army Special Forces team I'm qualified as a joint terminal attack controller, so I am the vital air-to-ground link that that team needs to bring precision-guided munitions and affect the battlefield and take the fight to the enemy. Air-to-ground in the sense of I talk to the pilots on the subject matter. Actually when it comes to munitions, what types of munitions you use, communications and talking to higher headquarters, passing information, situation updates and getting all that news to the team leader who's in charge so we can effectively engage the enemy with precision.

Q: Thank you.

LT. WALKER: All right, thanks, Chuck.

Amy McCullough, you're up next.

MS. : Can I interject just real quick? We just want to correct the record for Chuck.

Chuck, this is a 2009 event that Sergeant Gutierrez was involved in and he's receiving the Air Force Cross for that. So I just want to make sure you don't get confused with what event it is. And I can get you the contact info and we can send you the event. We can send you a little write-up of the event.

Q: Yeah, what confused me is there's a Stars and Stripes story I'm looking at right now that says this occurred in 2008.

MS. : OK. It was 2009 and if I can get your -- I'll get your contact information afterward and I can get you the write-up and all the accurate information.

Q: Thanks.

LT. WALKER: OK, thanks. And we can post that online as well. Amy, you're next.

Q: Sergeant -- (off mic) -- thank you so much for being here today. Sorry we only have a few minutes. You mentioned that you were in the battle with Robby Miller, you also in the same battle with Zak Branersley (ph). (Off mic) -- how does this situation compare to other -- (off mic)?

SGT. GUTIERREZ: Really, there's no -- there's no real way to say there's similarities, things like that. Every flight is different. Every flight has a different outcome. Every flight has a different objective. This is honestly -- for every combat controller that's out there, for every special tactics operator that's out there, this is a normal day-to-day thing for us. I did nothing -- anything different than my guys that I trained with, my brothers that I fight with, my guys that I'm training now, that they're going to not do. They're all going to do the same thing. This is what we get paid to do.

We get paid to fight.

We get paid to do it right and affect the battlefield with a large, we'll say, result, we'll say. So those are normal like day-to-days for my guys and for me and that's what we train to do, so.

Q: Can I follow up with that?

LT. WALKER: Sure.

Q: Can I also ask you, the medic who saved your life essentially was like -- (off mic). Can you talk about your relationship with him and any --

SGT. GUTIERREZ: Sure. Sergeant Mike, Sergeant First Class Mike is a -- he's a great friend of mine. We have a distinct relationship now in the sense of like he's my best friend. You know, the man saved my life in the middle of a firefight, in the middle of dark, under fire, in intense circumstances, so I only -- I owe him everything. You know, I am eternally grateful to him and, you know, thankful that someone like that was on the battlefield that day to do his job really well.

LT. WALKER: All right, thanks, Amy. A note to the reporters who are in the room, you're going to have to speak up a little bit louder so that the transcription service will work and the audio recording will be clean. Up next is Mel.

Q: Sergeant Gutierrez, you lost half your blood from your injury that day, your wound that day. Can you talk about the things that go through your mind as you're seriously wounded and you're still trying to desperately help and perform the mission?

SGT. GUTIERREZ: That's actually -- it's a very good question, ma'am. In all reality we are so focused and so -- so focused on getting the job done, I actually didn't even know how much I was bleeding. It was probably one the least concerns on my mind. The bigger concern was eliminating the threat and making sure the rest of my guys, the men that I was fighting actually with, that we were going to leave that night, that we were going to walk out, that were going, you know, safely exit the area.

So I didn't really know that I was bleeding that much. I understood that I had a pretty grave wound, but like I said, it's a couple of things that we always say within our community is mission first, team first, then you. So.

Q: At any point at that time did you think you were going to die?

SGT. GUTIERREZ: There is always a small piece that says, hey, you know, this could be -- this could be it. This could be the last day that I'm on this planet, but -- because it's always in the back of your mind. I mean, you gamble any time you go outside the wire, there's a gamble. I knowingly accept that gamble. Every operator does it. They know. So to a point I was like, yeah, maybe I might die here, but that's -- I really don't -- almost in the sense of where you really don't care because I've got to fight.

You get up and you fight and you drive on. So there's no room to be a burden or no room to think and think like that because the way we think is we're going into this fight and you're coming out regardless. So within myself I just told myself, you know, you're going to get up, you're going to fight, I'm going to stand up, I'm going to kill the enemy, we're going to do what we've got to do, and then we're going to go home.

Q: Thank you.

SGT. GUTIERREZ: Yes, ma'am.

LT. WALKER: All right, thanks Mel and Tech Sergeant (sic\Staff Sergeant).

Up next is Scott from Air Force Times.

Q: Tech Sergeant (sic\Staff Sergeant), thanks again for coming on out. I've got a question that I will apologize in advance might be a bit awkward to ask, but they've mentioned -- (inaudible) -- several times in here. I ran actually into a major commander up there that told me off

the record he was surprised that you weren't nominated for the Medal of Honor. Combat Control Association president also said the same thing.

What do you say to this -- to, you know, these people that say that the Air Force Cross is an immense honor but perhaps this shouldn't have been worthy of a Medal?

SGT. GUTIERREZ: Well, Mr. Fontaine, like I've said before, you know, I get paid for -- I get paid to do what I do. We don't -- none of my brothers, none of my operators, none of the guys that I teach, we don't do this for any kind of recognition. I really don't. I do this to fight for my nation. I do this to get out on the battlefield and have the opportunity to take the fight to the enemy, so, you know, I'm blessed and honored and humbled to even be considered for this, you know. I was just doing my job, just like any other recipient, every other guys like, you know, Sergeant Reiner (ph) is a good friend of mine and he just tells you the same thing. He's another Air Force Cross recipient. We were just doing our job. That's what we get paid to do. And I'm honored to think that even someone would think about that, but in the big picture I'm just -- you know, I love my job and this is what I love to do, so it's kind of hard to see that, you know, but I'm just thankful. I'm thankful to be alive. I'm thankful to be here today.

Q: Sure. And one thing that hopefully will -- (inaudible). Can you tell me how your life has changed since the news came down? Didn't you go up to New York with Secretary Panetta?

SGT. GUTIERREZ: Yes, sir.

Q: I mean, has that been one of the major things, or is -- how have things changed, I should ask.

SGT. GUTIERREZ: It's obviously changed for the better. I mean, my life has always been good anyways. I get paid to do this for a living. I love my family. I'm very thankful for everything I have, you know. So there's, you know, things to represent the Air Force and AFSOC in general to go up and do that, so I'm honored and thanks that they would even, you know, to be like, hey, we're going to send Sergeant Gutierrez to go represent the Air Force and represent AFSOC.

We have so many other valuable and heroic brave airmen that go out and do things every day. It could be from the supply troop to the maintainer troop that's out there doing everything, and out of all those people they pick me, and I'm very humbled and honored to do that because we have so many other people that are just as -- as equal to me to represent the Air Force. So it's a -- it's a blessing and I'm thankful to go up and do things like that. So it's a -- it's a change, but we can adapt.

Q: Thank you.

LT. WALKER: All right, thanks, Scott.

Next up we have Airman Tomlin (sp).

Q: I hear you and also a lot of other people who have been labeled as heroes say that you don't feel like you're a hero; you were just doing your job. So I wanted to know how would you define hero -- how you would define a true hero?

SGT. GUTIERREZ: Miss, that's an excellent question.

Honestly, when I -- when I look at "hero" I look at people who have, A, have given the ultimate sacrifice -- my friends, my colleagues, you know, anyone in the services is giving the ultimate sacrifice. Those people are heroes. You know, my good friend Sergeant Andy Harvell was killed in action in Afghanistan this year; and the two other PJs that were with him, Sergeant Zerbe and Sergeant Brown. Those guys are heroes.

They did everything. They will live forever in history as heroes because they gave the ultimate sacrifice -- Tech Sergeant John Chapman, Senior Airman Jason Cunningham, Sergeant Scott Sather, Sergeant Will Jefferson, the list goes on. Because those guys gave everything for our nation, for our freedoms, for everything, you know, for me, for my family. So that's who I look at as heroes, because they eternally live forever. I look at heroes as our, you know, families -- people that support all our guys that are out there. Those people deserve that kind of honor. You know, I had a brief stint where I was able to come back on our deployment, coming back in transition, and I got to go to the -- it's all the maintainers, and crew members, and the bomb loaders, and the ammo supply troops and stuff -- and I went over there and I said: Hey, thanks. You guys are my heroes, because without your work, without your selfless dedication of getting those aircraft ready, those bombs loaded, those supplies in the C-17s, C-130s, whatever the case, my life would be miserable and impossible. My job would be impossible to do without your help.

So I look at them as, you know, as heroes, because they take care of everyone, in a sense of it's a large -- in the Air Force we have so many heroes out there, you know. So that's what I would say. I'm just an average person. I'm a normal guy that came up -- grew up San Diego, California, reading San Diego gas and electric meters, running from -- walking from street to street. (Chuckles.) You know what I mean. I'm just a normal person.

My men that I have out there, like my guys that are in the fight right now, those are the heroes.

LT. WALKER: OK, thank you, Tech Sergeant (sic\Staff Sergeant).

Dale, you're up next.

Q: Good afternoon, Tech Sergeant Gutierrez (sic\Staff Sergeant). Thank you very much for taking the time to talk to all of us today.

As a former AFSOC-type guy and I recognize what you do, and know what you did that night, and thank you.

How many air -- without getting into anything that might be classified, can you tell us a little bit more detail about the engagement -- how many aircraft you controlled; and how long was the battle; and how long before you were medevaced?

SGT. GUTIERREZ: Probably say there was about six aircraft -- total, working sometimes simultaneously, sometimes when a couple of them were going to get fuel back and forth; all attack-type fighter aircraft -- A-10s, F-16s and one ISR platform. The battle took about four-plus hours. And we engaged a number -- from 70 to 30 fighters, all with a tactical advantage, all on the high ground, on two-story buildings fighting out of different positions to our 12-man force. So, they had a superior position, and we went in there knowing that. We understand that. But we're a better-trained, well-equipped force. We're a better team. So we're going to go in there and get the job done.

There was a lot of times where being shot and wounded is one thing; but you sit there and you think about it, and you're like, OK, well, the mission has still got to get done regardless. So you focus on that. You focus on the rest of your team, because everybody relies on each other. And I could never be a burden to any of them.

So if I would have just allowed myself to sit there and die, then I would just become a burden. Now they got to carry 250-plus pounds of equipment, radio, rifle. And I'm kind of a grumpy guy sometimes when I'm hurting, so, you know, I would have been a burden, so -- and I was -- I refused to do that. So those men that fought next to me, you know, bravely, they don't deserve that. They deserve 120 percent, so I refused to give any less. That way, they would be taken care of.

So did that answer it, or do you want something else -- a different, another question?

Q: No, that was great.

How long into the battle before you had to leave and be medevaced out?

SGT. GUTIERREZ: Probably about, I would say, sir, about three-and-a-half hours into it, four hours into it. It took us about -- it took us a good while to walk, after all the air strikes, and using the last one as cover and concealment to get out of there.

Based on my wounds and injuries -- my ears, and my balance, and, you know, obviously bleeding blood and coughing blood, and blood is coming out my nose and things, and gaining my composure to get up and stand up -- it took us about a good 45 minutes, maybe 50 minutes to walk to the secondary HLZ, because the first one we put up was considered a hot LZ and we never put the risk of additional casualties or anything into the -- into the fight.

So that's why we went to the second one; and waited about -- once I got there and secured it and marked it. And then I had another problem with my lung -- it collapsed again. So after getting treated again and understanding what was going on, we waited about an hour and 10 minutes for the medevac. And then finally, once it got there, we were -- I was wheels-up and in better hands, being seen by, you know, surgeons and doctors. And that took roughly -- you know, a short distance to get back to a hospital. So hopefully that answers your question, sir. Q: It did. Thank you very much. And, again, thank you for your service and your humble attitude about life.

SGT. GUTIERREZ: Thank you. Thank you. I appreciate your support.

LT. WALKER: OK, up next we have Adam Hebert from Air Force Magazine.

Q: (Inaudible).

I've got a question about the lead in to the mission. Why was it necessary to hoof it two-and-a-half miles? It's a hell of a long way to go -- (inaudible) -- drop you off by helicopter -- (inaudible) -- like they did in another one of those missions?

SGT. GUTIERREZ: Based on what we had available -- and on top of that, the threat -- we couldn't drive, because, A, the roads are kind of small; B, they're ridden with IEDs in the area. So we weren't going to -- we weren't going to drive into that area.

And sometimes the best way is your fundamentals. You know, I guess the walk-in speed; we had night -- night is in your favor; we trained to a standard -- we move out and move out at a fast pace; we control the situation; we get there. And that's why we decided to go in on foot. Based on the terrain, based on the route and things of the sort, it best suited it. So that's why we decided to go that way with -- on foot. There's certain reasons to why we do such distance, but that's all for our -- to favor us into the fight. So that's why.

Q: (Inaudible.)

SGT. GUTIERREZ: We expected a different amount. We didn't expect to get that many fighters.

But, you know, the enemy is not dumb, at any -- by any means. They've been fighting for a long time. So we were -- we were ready to go in there, and know we were going to have a pretty fierce enemy, someone that was not -- you know, definitely had a plan. They were there to fight. And though they have their reasons, or whatever the case, but we have a job to do and get it done. So we expected, you know, a good amount of resistance.

Q: (Off mic.)

SGT. GUTIERREZ: Yes, sir.



LT. WALKER: OK, thank you.

We have enough time to go back around the horn to Chuck Simmins. Go ahead, Chuck. Q: Thank you.

Sergeant, I don't know whether you can answer this or not, but - without violating classification, but was your mission successful?

SGT. GUTIERREZ: Yes, sir.

Q: OK. And as a matter of routine, are you normally briefed on what air assets may be available to you before you set out on a mission?

SGT. GUTIERREZ: Yes, sir. I'm usually the one that does the request form.

Q: Oh, OK, so you actually had assets assigned when you went out?

SGT. GUTIERREZ: Yes, sir. We requested them prior to leaving. And because of the geographical location of where we were at, it took awhile to get to us, but they were there -- something that I asked for. Because, regardless of what it is, you know, that's a big country and there's a lot of fighting going on, I would never take anything away from anyone else -- or you know, the dire situation that other troops need, whether it's Army, Navy, Marine Corps or my other counterparts.

So we took what was, you know, was able to get to us and utilize it to the best of my ability. So -- but we definitely -- we requested it and it was ours, sir. I knew what was coming.

Q: OK. And just one quick final question. Do you work with non- United States Air Force units in Afghanistan as well?

SGT. GUTIERREZ: Sir, we work with coalition partners every day, sir -- every day in Afghanistan and all over the world. So I'm just as honored to fight with them -- with my friends, and my operators and my own -- just alongside with them. Was working with Coalition all the time, sir.

Q: Great. Thank you so much. SGT. GUTIERREZ: Yes, sir. Thank you.

LT. WALKER: All right, thanks, Chuck.

Amy Makoa (sp), you're up next.

I remind everyone to speak a little bit loud if you're in the room there, please.

Q: I have two quick questions -- (inaudible.) The target compound that you had -- (inaudible) -- kind of holed up in, were there

fighters inside there? If so, how many -- (inaudible) -- or were they all under attack?

SGT. GUTIERREZ: Most of them -- the majority of them were on the rooftop. We had some resistance inside. My team -- honestly, in the first assault force, first team, those guys are -- I mean, you're talking about the tip of the spear. They went in and they took care of business.

So they handled what we did have, whatever personnel we had in the building, and then the majority -- you know, 90 percent of our threat was outside adjacent to us, and just to the south, multiple personnel are coming from the outskirts of the village into fight us.

Q: And are you still going through physical therapy? Have you been cleared to -- (inaudible)?

SGT. GUTIERREZ: I am fit for duty. I'm jumping, diving, shooting. I'm teaching right now. I do small bits of reoccurring, like, physical therapy. Because I'll make -- I'll make great improvements, and then I always -- we never want to be satisfied with just, oh, I'm just ready. No, I want to be beyond ready, because I want to go back to the fight and get back into the fight. So we're always trying to make improvements.

LT. WALKER: OK, up next we have Mel (sp).

Q: Sergeant, two questions. They may or may not be quick, depending on how you choose to answer them.

Obviously what you have lived through forever changes you. What lessons did you learn on the battlefield that day that you will carry with you throughout life?

SGT. GUTIERREZ: That you can do anything. There is no limit to anything. You could be -- you can be injured, you can be on your dying bed, but you can get up. You'd be surprised what the human body and the mind will do to survive. And what drives that is all based on the person, you know. What drove me was my men that I was fighting with, my family at home, the people that -- you know, that get to live safely in this country because they depend on our work. So, you know, our safety, our securities depend on men who are willing to go over there into the fight and go after them at any means. So to change me in a sense that I can -- nothing really can stop me. I'm going to keep going, and I try to instill that in the men that I teach, you know, because I know what's out there. I know other guys that are out there doing the same thing right now. So it's really a mind-changing -- you know, it changes your life but it's good for the better.

Q: You talked eloquently this afternoon about the importance of your men, both coalition forces and United States airmen. You also talked about your family. So this is a question that you could tell a little bit about who your -- who makes up your family -- your real family?

SGT. GUTIERREZ: (Inaudible) -- my real family.

Q: Not that the Air Force isn't your real family but your blood and blood family.

SGT. GUTIERREZ: I have a lot of family in Southern California, and my parents are wonderful. Pray, you know, they're good middle class living family. They've given me everything I could ever ask for -- you know, given me good morals and taught me between right and wrong, left and right, how to tie my shoes. And I've got siblings -- older sister, younger brothers -- and then, of course, my first -- now, my new family. I have a wonderful wife, I have a beautiful daughter.

When this was happening she wasn't born yet. She was still in the womb. So when you think of family and you think you're in a fight and something's going wrong or whatever the case, you know, little people -- little people, that's what I call my little one -- I call her -- she's my little person -- you know, they rely on, you know, me. I wasn't going to give up and die that day just because, you know, I have someone who I hadn't even seen yet and I really want -- I mean, any father will tell you, you know, nothing better than seeing your children.

So I wanted to get home to my wife and my unborn child. So that -- that's my family. And then, you know, right next to that are all my guys on my teams with me. Every guy who wears the same red scarlet beret, that's my family. We take each -- we take care of each other. We look after each other and then --

Q: And you have another baby on the way?

SGT. GUTIERREZ: I do.

Q: Is that right? SGT. GUTIERREZ: Yes.

Q: Do you know what it is -- boy or girl?

SGT. GUTIERREZ: I do, ma'am. I have a boy coming so --

Q: Good. And what's your wife's name?

SGT. GUTIERREZ: Julianne.

Q: And the daughter? If you don't want to say that's fine.

SGT. GUTIERREZ: Yeah.

Q: For security purposes I understand.

SGT. GUTIERREZ: Yes, ma'am.

Q: Thank you.

LT. WALKER: All right. Thanks. Mel, we have our -- sorry. Thanks, Mel. We have time for one more. We're going to go to Scott

Fontaine and then I'll wrap it up with some administrative and closing statement from Tech Sergeant (sic\Staff Sergeant). Go ahead.

Q: Well, I was just kind of curious more as -- this is a meat and potatoes type of question. When is the ceremony where you receive the Air Force Cross, who's going to be there, that kind of stuff? Just kind of the basics.

SGT. GUTIERREZ: Sir, I believe it's in --

MS. : It's to be determined -- (inaudible).

SGT. GUTIERREZ: It's to be determined right now. We're always hoping that, you know, that our top leadership can be there to help out and give it. Like I said, it's an honor -- it's an honor to receive this kind of award so receiving it from that -- those type of individuals of our -- of our leadership is always a blessing, you know. I came in as a one-striper, you know, and now I'm getting this from them -- the top leadership of our Air Force. I mean, that's -- to me, that's amazing that they would take the time to do that, you know, because they're busy people. They have a lot of things to do. They have to run an Air Force -- (chuckles) -- you know, and fight a war. You know what I mean? And to take the time to come and do that is a blessing so --

Q: It's done at Hurlburt Field?

SGT. GUTIERREZ: Yeah.

LT. WALKER: Of the actual presentation? Should be at Hurlburt, yeah.

Q: OK. That's the plan -- (inaudible)? LT. WALKER: Yeah. That's the plan but still could -- (inaudible). And we actually have one more reporter that arrived a little bit late. Sir?

Q: Let me ask you a tactical question. About 10 years ago, I talked to -- (inaudible) -- about the famous -- (inaudible). Maybe they do it all -- (inaudible) -- equipment -- (inaudible). You talked -- (inaudible) -- personal -- (inaudible). I'd like to know how the U.S. industry helped you in your -- how did you call in the strike? Did you use just radio -- (inaudible) -- laser and GPS? What were the techie aspects that allowed you to call -- (inaudible)?

SGT. GUTIERREZ: Using -- I carry two radios at night where it's critical under NODS (ph), under NVGs, using lasers and things like that to confirm targets, confirm targets for the aircraft, aircraft using its own laser, IR marker to confirm that hey, is this the target -- yes, I have confirmed it by putting my own to it -- yes, we know this is the same target. They see the people. They see the fighters. They know our locations.

So it was a -- basically a -- I used two -- not -- they're like handheld radios but with earpieces where I can talk and push the talks to get it out with multi -- I'm using multi radios with multiple frequencies

so that was mainly it. You know, there was a lot of good planning that went into it. You know, you always plan the mission so planning that, giving that information up to all the supporting pilots. So that was a big piece.

Q: Do you use laser -- you land the target -- (inaudible) -- both of you working where the Taliban -- (inaudible)?

SGT. GUTIERREZ: Yes, sir. We were -- that's how I was able to confirm it, you know. That's such -- that's such close proximity within friendlies, that kind of a strike you need to have a confirmation but like a double confirmation that we are looking at the same target to strike.

Q: In your -- (inaudible) -- and laser with department -- (inaudible)?

SGT. GUTIERREZ: Through my -- through my NVGs, sir, on my helmet.

Q: (Inaudible.)

SGT. GUTIERREZ: Yes, sir.

Q: The technology has -- (inaudible) -- incredible in the last decade.

SGT. GUTIERREZ: Extremely, sir. Very helpful. Just transmit information, get information out there and push it out. Q: What about using a Rover too to talk to the -- (inaudible)? Did you get one of them?

SGT. GUTIERREZ: I did have a Rover, sir.

Q: Was that used also?

SGT. GUTIERREZ: Yes, sir. I mean, it's -- we use anything we can get our hands on to have the tactical advantage and to see because that's all the feeds -- all that live feed that you're receiving is live. You see it. It's there. It's going on. You know, using a Rover to be able to see prior to the target, to understand the numbers where people are hiding, where people are moving to. So we use that and Harris radios, the 152 -- the Harris 152.

Q: The reason I'm asking this is because, you know -- (inaudible) -- test your sensibilities -- (inaudible) -- to help you and it's useful to see how this stuff actually plays out in a -- (inaudible) -- situation.

SGT. GUTIERREZ: Yes, sir. In the fight. Yes, sir.

LT. WALKER: Sir, can you tell us your name and the publication?

Q: Tony -- (off mic).

MS. : OK. Great. Yeah.

LT. WALKER: OK. Thank you, sir. We've had some great questions and comments on the call today. As we need to wrap it up, I'd like to ask the tech sergeant (sic\Staff Sergeant) if he has any final comments.

MS. : Before we do that, let's correct the record. He is a staff sergeant -- Staff Sergeant Robert Gutierrez.

LT. WALKER: Oh, sorry about that -- Staff Sergeant Robert Gutierrez. Staff Sergeant, do you have anything else to say?

SGT. GUTIERREZ: Well, hopefully I pin it on in December so --

MS. : Yes, you will.

SGT. GUTIERREZ: And you will be -- you'll be able to call me -- (inaudible). I'm a select right now so.

MS. : Sergeant Select.

SGT. GUTIERREZ: You know, thank you guys for your time. Thank you for coming out here and asking. I really appreciate it. My career field appreciates it. You know, the Air Force in general appreciates it. We thank you your publications will get this -- the news out to all our citizens and so they understand that we are always in the fight. Our men and women are always in danger's way. Regardless of what they do in the Air Force, they're always in danger's way. So, you know, when you guys get this out to them it helps people understand that there is a war going on -- that we have men and women that are doing extreme, extraordinary things and that I'm thankful to be out there fighting with them and, again, I appreciate your guys' time. You know, thank you guys very much. Thank you for your support.

LT. WALKER: All right. We appreciate it. Thank you, and congratulations again, Staff Sergeant. Today's program will be available online at [dodlive.mil](http://dodlive.mil) where you'll be able to access the story based on today's call along with source documents such as this audio file and a print transcript. Again, thank you, Staff Sergeant Gutierrez, and our blogger participants as well as the reporters that were in the room. This concludes today's event. Feel free to disconnect at this time. Goodbye.

END.